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VACCINATION IN THE PHILIPPINES.

The following extracts from correspondence, printed in a recent issue of *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*,¹ are of interest in connection with the effectiveness of vaccination in the prevention of smallpox and as a refutation of attacks sometimes made upon the procedure.

A LETTER FROM MAJ. GEN. LEONARD WOOD, M. D.

MANILA, *May 9, 1922.*

MR. EDITOR: Your letter of March 21 received on April 26.

I am inclosing copies of two letters which I think will prove interesting to the readers of *The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, and hope that both the letter and its answer may be given wide publicity, as it will, perhaps, tend to check the unthinking and dangerous attacks which are made upon vaccination from time to time.

Wherever vaccination has been carried out carefully in the Philippine Islands, smallpox has practically disappeared. Wherever it has been neglected or inefficiently done, we have had frightful loss of life. The people who are familiar with the situation are keenly appreciative of the benefits of vaccination.

The general health situation is complex and difficult. The Philippines are greatly in need of doctors, nurses, and well-trained sanitary inspectors. Efforts are being made to encourage the study of medicine and surgery and to greatly increase the number of nurses and sanitary inspectors. With approximately 11,000,000 people, we have less than 1,100 trained nurses, about 1,200 physicians and surgeons, and altogether too few well-trained sanitary inspectors. We need at least three times the number of nurses we now have and a very great increase in the number of well-educated medical men. Arrangements are being made for a brief intensive course of training for sanitary inspectors.

A medical survey of the islands is being made under the direction of the Rockefeller Foundation, and steps are being taken to give widespread instruction to the people in food values and to correct the tendency to use too much polished rice, to which is traceable directly 50 per cent of the heavy annual infant death rate from infantile beriberi. The present infantile death rate is very heavy; about one-third of all children born die in the first year.

We are also reorganizing the great leper colony at Culion of over 5,000 lepers, so that better and more extensive treatment of the lepers may be possible and the results made available for the medical profession everywhere.

¹ Vol. 186, No. 25, June 22, 1922, pp. 865-866.

There is a growing interest among the people in sanitary matters, and no efforts are being spared to build up an appreciation of the value of preventive medicine and sanitation.

There is an excellent field for the medical missionary and the small, well equipped and maintained hospital in the Philippines. The hospitals which have been established by the various churches and missionary organizations are all much appreciated and are doing good work and have been of great value in supplementing the vigorous efforts of the Government. They meet, however, only in part the demand of the situation. Arrangements for the better care and treatment of the insane are also under consideration. The institutions at present in use are largely lacking in the facilities of proper treatment. Much was done while William Cameron Forbes was Governor General to improve the water supply through the provision of many artesian wells, but an adequate supply of pure water is still one of the great problems.

The Filipinos are naturally a healthy people and their houses so built that they have ample ventilation; but there is, nevertheless, a good deal of tuberculosis. We have also a difficult problem to deal with in controlling malaria.

I have but indicated some of the medical and sanitary problems, but I am sure I have said enough to indicate that there is plenty to do for the dietitian, the sanitarian, and the medical profession generally.

Very sincerely yours,

LEONARD WOOD.

THE AMERICAN HUMANE ASSOCIATION.

ALBANY, N. Y., *March 22, 1922.*

Maj. Gen. LEONARD WOOD,

Governor General Philippine Islands, Manila, P. I.

DEAR GENERAL WOOD: * * * A correspondent in Tampa, Fla., has just sent me a clipping which discusses the matter of smallpox vaccination in the Philippines. It states:

In 1918 the Philippine Health Service shot 3,286,376 slugs of pus into that number of Filipinos and reaped a harvest of 47,369 cases of smallpox with 10,447 deaths.

In 1919 they improved the service and delivered 7,670,252 pus puncheries into their brown brethren and reaped a harvest of 65,180 cases of smallpox with 44,408 deaths.

I have no means of determining the truth of such a statement. If you can put me in the way of getting definite and reliable facts in regard to the conditions referred to, I shall be very glad to have the information.

Hoping that you are well and realizing that you will do everything to make good for our Filipino brethren, I am

Faithfully your friend,

W. O. STILLMAN, *President.*

P. S.—Does the above mean that the vaccination was a failure? I am a physician.

S.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.

MANILA, *April 29, 1922.*

DEAR DR. STILLMAN: Your letter of March 22, quoting statement from a correspondent in Florida, which would seem to throw doubt upon the efficacy of vaccination, has just been received. The real facts are diametrically opposite; instead of there being any doubt as to the value of vaccination against smallpox it has been doubly confirmed.

According to the reports of the Philippine Health Service, 1918, there have been even a larger number of deaths reported than quoted by your correspondent. When the records are analyzed they show that something like 90 per cent of the deaths occurred in children, most of whom were born since 1913. The records show that vaccination has been steadily continued since 1913, but on investigation it was found that, owing to the inefficient inspection, vaccination consisted mostly in destroying the vaccine and submitting reports to the main office that it had been applied. In brief, a huge unvaccinated population had accumulated in the Philippines; it only required a spark to set it into conflagration, and in a short time a smallpox epidemic began among these unvaccinated children which assumed huge proportions and eventually gained such virulence that it affected persons who under ordinary conditions would have been safe. The figures of the city of Manila bear out this statement in a striking manner. Among 989 deaths that were recorded, all but 100 occurred in children under 10 years of age. Again, of 1,826 cases received at the Manila Infectious Disease Hospital, 813 had never been vaccinated; and of these 680 died; 336 had been vaccinated with negative results; of these 249 died. Of the total 1,826 cases received at the hospital only 176 had evidence of vaccination, many of which were undoubtedly performed many years prior to the attack of the disease. Among this number there were 60 deaths. During 1919 more effective vaccination was begun, and there was such a decline in the smallpox epidemic that by 1920 there were only 5 cases in Manila, and none in 1921.

From the accompanying table it will be seen that after effective vaccination had been established in the city of Manila there were no

deaths for seven years. It is also interesting to observe that before the days of systematic vaccination in the Philippine Islands there were approximately 40,000 deaths per year from smallpox. As effectual vaccination was carried out the disease disappeared province by province.

It is apparent, therefore, that the foregoing information makes concrete proof of the value and desirability of vaccination when it is effectually applied. * * *

Yours very sincerely,

LEONARD WOOD.

Dr. WILLIAM O. STILLMAN,

President American Humane Association, Albany, N. Y.

Deaths caused by smallpox in the city of Manila.

[Transients and residents included.]

Year.	Age group.												Total.
	30 days.	30 days to 1 year.	1-2 years.	3-4 years.	5-9 years.	10-14 years.	15-19 years.	20-29 years.	30-39 years.	40-49 years.	50 years and over.	Un-known.	
1904.....		3	10		1		3	10		1		1	29
1905.....			1				1						2
1906.....		2	1				2						5
1907.....	1												1
1908.....		16	58		20	3	9	9	5	1	1		122
1909.....		4	11		1		2	5	2				25
1910.....													0
1911.....													0
1912.....													0
1913.....													0
1914.....													0
1915.....													0
1916.....										1			1
1917.....		1	1										2
1918.....	3	193	193	335	148	23	40	44	5	2	2		989
1919.....	2	10	6	13	9	1	4	7	3				55
1920.....		1	3					1					5
1921.....													0

DEATH RATES IN A GROUP OF INSURED PERSONS.

COMPARISON OF DEATH RATES FOR PRINCIPAL CAUSES, JUNE AND JULY, 1922.

The accompanying table is taken from the Statistical Bulletin of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. for August, 1922, and presents the mortality experience of the industrial department of the company for June and July, 1922, and July and year, 1921. The figures are based on a strength of approximately 14,000,000 insured persons.

It is stated that the death rate for July, 1922 (7.6 per 1,000), equals that for August, 1919, the lowest rate ever recorded for this group of persons. This represents a drop of 16.3 per cent from the rate for June, 1922, and of 4 per cent from that for July, 1921. It is stated that despite the influenza flurry in the early part of this year, the cumulative death rate is only 3 per cent in excess of that for the first seven months of 1921.